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SKO-104-A-1

IN THE UNITED STATE PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

Applicant: Hidcaki TOJO et al.

Serial No.: 08/627,270

US Filing Date: 04/04/96

Group Art Unit: 3726

Examiner: Echols, P.

Title: "METHOD AND MACHINE FOR FORMING PROTECTIVE FILM ON
SPRAYED COATING OF LARGE-SIZED PRODUCT"

DECLARATION UNDER 37 C.F.R. 1.132

Assistant Commissioner for Patents
Washington, D.C. 20231

Duplicate accepted.
Markman date = 2/14/02
[of mail date = 2/1/02]

Stephen Marcus
Special Program Examiner
Group 3700
4/11/02

Sir:

I, Hisashi Kurota, a citizen of Japan, hereby declare and state:

1. I am a graduate of Nagai Technical High School in March 1975.
2. I have been employed by Honda Giken Kogyo Kabushiki Kaisha since 1975 and I have had a total of 25 years of work and research experience in Painting and Coating of Automobiles including Quality Control, Performance Test and Development of Painting and Coating Materials.
3. I have been engaged in research and development of a Method of Forming a Protective Film on Automobiles since 1992.
4. I had been a coordinator of the Surface Treatment Section of Honda's inter-office Industrial Engineering Committee for 2 years.
5. I am one of the co-inventors of the subject matter claimed in U.S. Serial No. 08/627,270, filed April 4, 1996, and familiar with the contents of that application which claims a vehicle

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manufacturing method involving formation of a protective film on a paint-finished automobile using a strippable paint, and particularly to such a method involving an automobile assembly process for thereby eliminating the need for certain steps of a conventional automobile assembly process, and familiar with the contents of the Office Action dated August 29, 2001 issued in said application.

6. For comparative purposes, the vehicle manufacturing method of the present invention involving formation of a protective film on a paint-finished automobile using a strippable paint and a conventional automobile assembling process using reusable anti-scratch covers are schematically illustrated in Exhibit A.

7. It is clear from Exhibit A that the vehicle manufacturing method of the present invention involving formation of a protective film on a paint-finished automobile using a strippable paint is advantageous over the conventional automobile assembly process using reusable anti-scratch covers, as enumerated below:

a) Reduced number of operator required. The conventional process requires a total of five (5) operators, as shown in Exhibit A, which include two operators each engaged in the attachment of anti-scratch covers on the left or the right of the vehicle, two operators each engaged in the detachment of anti-scratch covers on the left or the right side of the vehicle, and one operator engaged in the transportation of anti-scratch covers. The attachment and detachment and transportation of covers are full-manual operations. These manual operations can be automated in a theoretical sense. However, such automation is practically impossible because an apparatus which is capable of attaching and detaching anti-scratch covers without damaging the paint-finished surface of the automobile

cannot be realized with reasonable cost. The inventive process apparently requires a total of five (5) operators, which include two operators each engaged in the coating of front fender and door on the left or the right side of the vehicle body, two operators each engaged in the coating of rear door and fender on the left and right side of the vehicle body, and one operator engaged in the coating of front and rear bumpers. However, by using an automated coating and drying apparatus, the number of required operators can be reduced to zero. In an automobile manufacturing line already including a liquid wrapping film coating process in preparation for shipment, such automated coating and drying apparatus can be easily realized with slight modification of the existing apparatus provided for achieving the liquid wrapping film coating process.

b) No space required for storage of the anti-scratch covers. The anti-scratch covers occupy 67.36 m^2 (actual measurements) in each assembling line (fender and door covers: 23.56 m^2 (19.4 m^2 on the attachment side and 4.16 m^2 on the detachment side), and bumper covers: 43.80 m^2 (23.40 m^2 on the attachment side and 20.40 m^2 on the detachment side)).

c) Transportation of the anti-scratch covers from detachment site to attachment site can be eliminated. The anti-scratch covers, as they are returned from the detachment site to the attachment site, travel a distance more than 650 m.

N.K.
1/28/02

d) Molding dies required for forming anti-scratch covers for each model of automobile can be eliminated. Anti-scratch covers are tailored to a specific configuration of each model of automobile and hence require special molding dies for formation thereof. The molding dies are expensive and increase the overall

manufacturing cost of the automobile.

e) Paint-finished surface is kept free from scratch which may occur when the anti-scratch covers are used with dust and debris adhering to the inside surfaces thereof.

f) Visual observation of configuration and painted color of automobile enabled.

The anti-scratch covers attached to the automobile prevent the operators from checking the configuration (including projections and recesses) and paint color of the automobile.

g) Bumpers acquire anti-scratch function before assembly.

I hereby declare that all statements made herein on my own knowledge are true, and that all statements made on information and belief are believed to be true; and further that these statements were made with the knowledge that willful false statements and the like so made are punishable by fine or imprisonment, or both, under Section 1001 of Title 18 of the United States Code, and that such willful false statements may jeopardize the validity of the application or any patent issued thereon.

Hisashi Kurota

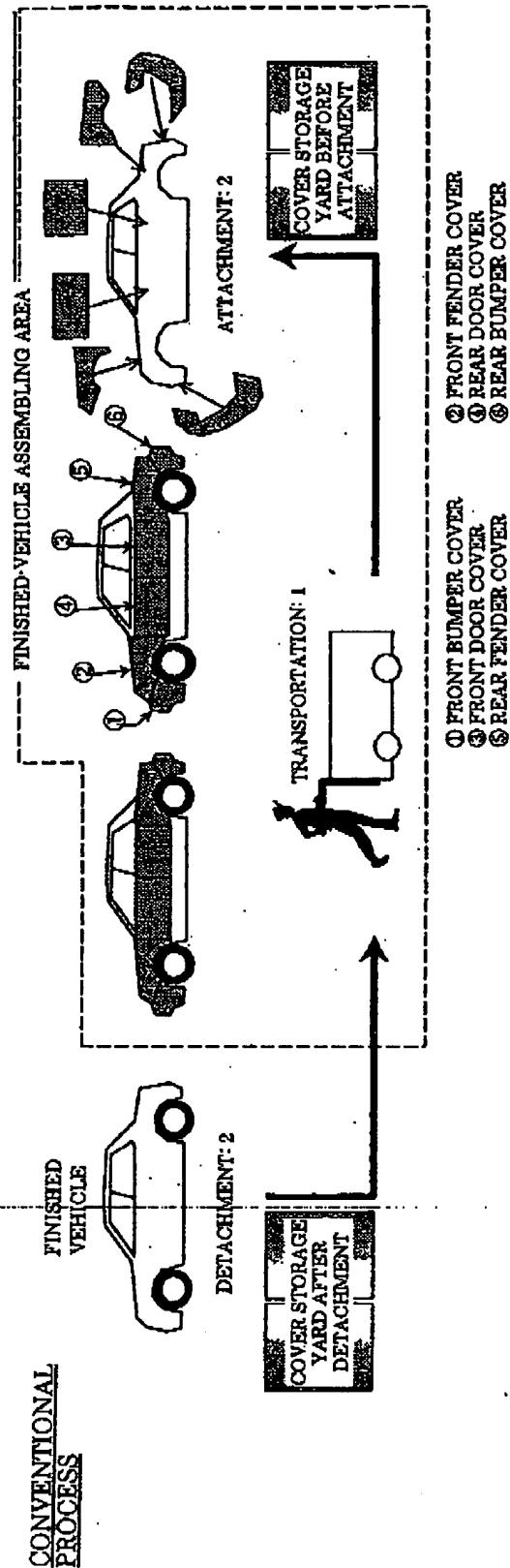
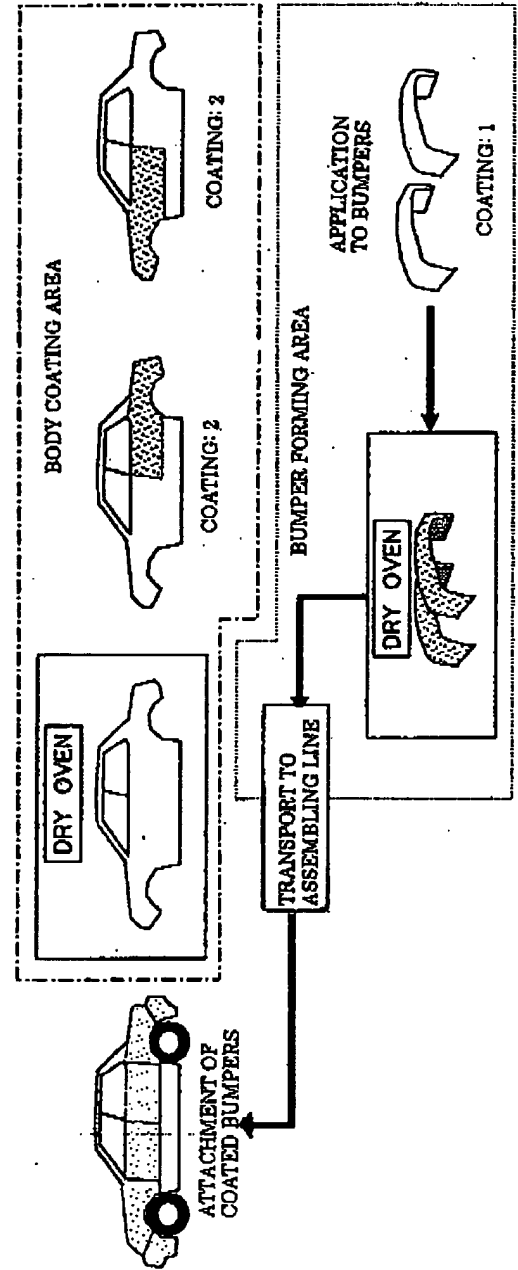
Hisashi Kurota

JAN 28, 2002

Date

EXHIBIT A

COMPARISON BETWEEN INVENTIVE VEHICLE MANUFACTURING METHOD INVOLVING FORMATION OF PROTECTIVE FILM ON PAINT-FINISHED AUTOMOBILE USING STRIPPABLE PAINT AND CONVENTIONAL AUTOMOBILE ASSEMBLING PROCESS USING REUSABLE ANTI-SCRATCH COVERS

CONVENTIONAL PROCESSINVENTIVE PROCESS

SKO-104-A-1**IN THE UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE**

Applicant: Tojo et al.
Serial Number: 08/627,270
U.S. Filing Date: April 4, 1996
Group Art Unit: 3726
Examiner: P. Echols
Title: "Method and Machine for Forming Protective Film
on Sprayed Coating of Large-Sized Product"

LETTER OF RECORD

Box Non-Fee Amendment
Assistant Commissioner for Patents
Washington, D.C. 20231

Sir:

In response to the non-final Office Action dated August 29, 2001, and further to the Amendment-E dated 28 January 2002, applicant encloses herewith the original of a Declaration Under 37 CFR 1.132 by inventor Hisashi KUROTA, corresponding to a facsimile copy declaration filed together with the Amendment-E in support of the patentability of the claimed invention.

REMARKS

Please note that the original declaration filed herewith is slightly different than the facsimile copy filed together with the Amendment-E due to clerical inadvertence. Particularly, the first three pages of the original Declaration filed herewith are different from those of the facsimile copy Declaration filed with the Amendment-E in that:

a) the title of the original document correctly includes 37 CFR 1.132, rather than 37 CFR 1.312;

b) under sub-paragraph 7.c) on the third page of the original document, the terms "anti scratch" are hand amended to include a hyphen therebetween, and the margin includes the

inventor's initials and date indicating when he inserted the hyphen; and

c) the last line on the third page of the original document is missing in the facsimile copy.

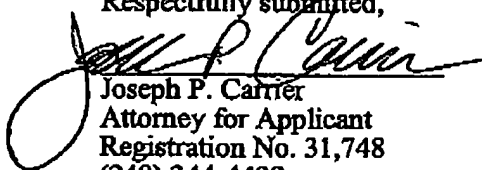
Again, these discrepancies were inadvertently caused by a clerical error without deceptive intent, i.e., it was assumed that the first three pages of the Declaration were unchanged from a previous draft of the Declaration, and the first three pages of the previous draft were substituted for the first three pages of the facsimile copy of the Declaration because they appeared cleaner.

Again, the application is believed to be in condition for allowance for those reasons previously asserted in Amendment-E, and a notice to this effect is earnestly solicited.

Favorable consideration is again respectfully requested.

Customer No. 21828
Carrier, Blackman & Associates, P.C.
24101 Novi Rd, Ste. 100
Novi, Michigan 48375
February 01, 2002

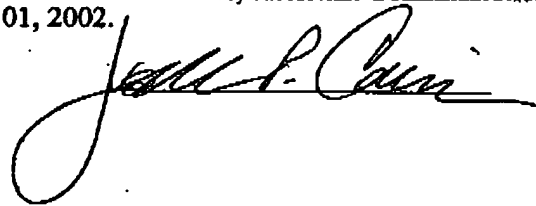
Respectfully submitted,


Joseph P. Carrier
Attorney for Applicant
Registration No. 31,748
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SKO-104-A-1

Party #33

IN THE UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

Applicant: Tojo et al.
Serial Number: 08/627,270 ✓
U.S. Filing Date: April 4, 1996
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Examiner: P. Echols
Title: "Method and Machine for Forming Protective Film
on Sprayed Coating of Large-Sized Product"

VERIFIED STATEMENT AND SUBMISSION OF DUPLICATE DOCUMENTS

Assistant Commissioner for Patents
Washington, D.C. 20231

Sir:

In connection with the above-identified application, applicant encloses herewith copies of an Amendment-E and a Petition For Two-Month Extension Of Time previously submitted to the US Patent & Trademark Office (PTO) on 28 January 2002, copies of a Letter of Record and a Declaration Under 37 C.F.R. 1.132 previously submitted to the PTO on 01 February 2002, and copies of postcard receipts showing that the PTO received the originals of such documents on February 14 and February 15, 2002.

The undersigned attorney for applicant hereby states that the enclosed copies of documents are identical duplicates of the original documents filed with the PTO. No new matter had been added to the present revised specification.

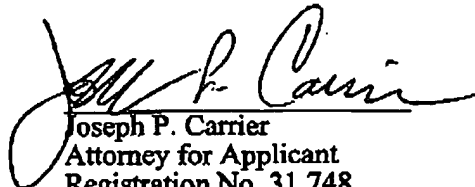
The undersigned declares further that all statements made herein of his own knowledge are true and that all statements made on information and belief are believed to be true; and further that these statements were made with the knowledge that willful false statements and the like so made are punishable by fine or imprisonment, or both, under Section 1001 of Title 18 of the United States Code and that such willful false statements may jeopardize the validity of the

application or any patent issuing thereon.

Favorable consideration is respectfully requested.

Respectfully submitted,

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April 11, 2002

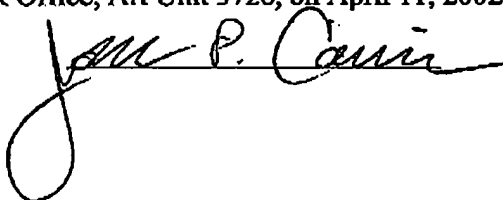

Joseph P. Carrier
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I hereby certify that this correspondence is being transmitted via facsimile to the US Patent & Trademark Office, Art Unit 3726, on April 11, 2002.

Dated: April 11, 2002



Applicant: Tojo et al.
 Serial No. 08/627,270
 For: Method and Machine for Forming Protective Film on
 Sprayed Coating of Large-Sized Product

Docket: SKO 104.19.1

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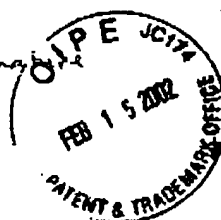
Applicant: Tojo et al.
 Serial No. 08/627,270
 For: Method and Machine for Forming Protective Film on
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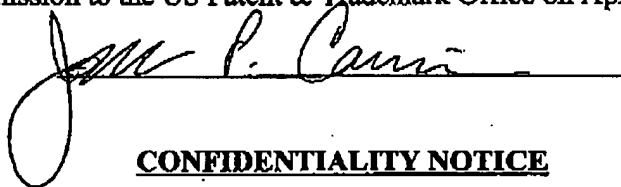
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